

After slow start, Tar Heels run by Wake Forest

UNC loses 1st game, then wins next 3

BY JACOB KARABELL
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

North Carolina's volleyball team learned from its mistakes.

After falling behind early in game one and finding itself unable to come back, the Tar Heels did just the opposite in the latter three games.

They minimized mistakes and went on early runs en route to a 27-

VOLLEYBALL 30, 30-27, 30-23, 30-17 victory against Wake

Wake Forest 1 Forest on
UNC 3 Forest on
Thursday at

Carmichael Auditorium.

After a 3-0 defeat to Maryland on Sunday, the Tar Heels (14-6, 5-2 in the ACC) knew they had to play strong against a Deacon team (14-5, 4-3) that came into Thursday's game tied with UNC for third in the ACC standings.

But they didn't start out that way. The match began with a mixture of UNC errors and Deacon Deacon kills, causing the Tar Heels to fall behind 11-7. Though the Tar Heels crawled back to within one point at three separate times in the game, they never were able to tie the score.

"We established six points that were important for us to be successful (before the game), and we did none of them in the first game," said North Carolina coach Joe Sagula. "We kind of went against all of them. We needed to settle down and get with it."

UNC heeded Sagula's advice to start the second game. With Norma Cortez serving, two Tar Heel kills along with three WFU miscues gave North Carolina a 5-0 lead that it would never relinquish.

Games three and four saw continued momentum in the Tar Heels' favor. The Deacs got out of

sync, and UNC capitalized.

"What was different in the next three games was that we came out from the beginning," said junior Katie Wright. "We knew we wanted to dominate the team because we knew we should and could."

Wright led the Tar Heels with 14 kills in the match. Wright and fellow middle hitter Aletha Green helped key the victory, as both finished with double-digit kills and hitting percentages close to 0.500.

"We found out we could go to our middles, so we made a minor adjustment," Sagula said. "They were very good tonight."

One reason UNC's middle hitters found themselves able to finish off so many kills effectively was Cortez's setting. The junior-college transfer had a game-high 48 sets Thursday. "She's in a very good rhythm and really running the offense well," Sagula said.

While Thursday's game might have been more important to UNC in the standings, Friday's game against Duke will have a special significance of its own. It will take place in the Smith Center in front of thousands of fans as a precursor to the "Late Night with Roy" festivities.

"We will hope that, when we make a great play, instead of having 200 people screaming, there will be 10,000 screaming," Sagula said. "It's an ideal situation for us."

Wright put the matchup a bit more bluntly. "I can't wait," she said. "It's going to be great. I love playing Duke. I love beating Duke. I can't wait to come out and kick their butts tomorrow night."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

THE LOWDOWN ON SATURDAY'S GAME



Arizona State
at North Carolina

(3-3, 1-2 Pac-10)



Kenan Stadium, 1:35 p.m.

(1-5, 0-3 ACC)

HEAD TO HEAD

<p>ASU's Rush vs. UNC's Front Seven:</p> <p>ASU's Pass vs. UNC's Secondary</p> <p>UNC's Rush vs. ASU's Front Seven:</p> <p>UNC's Pass vs. ASU's Secondary</p> <p>Special Teams</p>	<p>UNC's young linebackers are slowly improving the team's run defense, but there's still a very long way to go. ASU's Hakim Hill is a decent running back, but the Tar Heels will make him look like a star. Edge: ASU</p> <p>Andrew Walter is the third top-notch QB the Tar Heels have faced in the last four weeks, but he easily could throw for even more yards than N.C. State's Philip Rivers or Virginia's Matt Schaub did. Edge: ASU.</p> <p>All four UNC tailbacks contributed last week, but success against ECU should be taken with a grain of salt. The Sun Devils are OK up front — not great, but they'll be good enough against UNC. Edge: ASU.</p> <p>Quarterback Darian Durant had his best collegiate game last year in Tempe, and his receivers have been solid again this year. Arizona State will pressure him, but Durant is poised in the pocket. Edge: UNC.</p> <p>UNC's Michael Waddell leads the nation in kickoff return average and is dangerous on punt returns as well. ASU punter Tim Parker is very good, but freshman kicker Jesse Ainsworth is inexperienced. Edge: UNC.</p>	    
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The Bottom Line — Arizona State 49, UNC 38

COMPILED BY AARON FITT

UNC defense to face powerful ASU attack

Game and time: Arizona State at North Carolina. Kickoff is at 1:35 p.m.

Site: Kenan Stadium

TV/Radio: The game will not be televised. Tar Heel Sports Network will provide live radio coverage; its flagship station is WCHL 1360-AM.

Records: Arizona State is 3-3, 1-2 in the Pac-10. North Carolina is 1-5, 0-3 in the ACC.

Series: Tied, 1-1.

The key matchup: Arizona State can score. A lot.

The Sun Devils put up 59 points against a respectable Oregon squad last week, snapping emphatically out of their three-game losing streak.

The Tar Heels should be fright-

ened. Despite performing well in a win against East Carolina a week ago, the North Carolina defense still is ranked 114th in the nation.

Final analysis/prediction: This will be the second consecutive barn-burner between these two teams.

ASU has struggled on the road this year, getting slapped around by Iowa and Oregon State, while the Tar Heels are still winless at home in the past two seasons. Something's got to give.

The North Carolina defense is very likely to give. They're in for a nightmare against an explosive Sun Devil offense that has found its stride.

Arizona State 49, UNC 38

— Compiled by Aaron Fitt

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